

patent and the Mori patent to arrive at the present claims, due to the substantially different subject matter between the two references. The Examiner does not make any comments regarding the motivation to combine the references in the Advisory Action, but instead cites a passage in Mori (col. 7, lines 30 to 35) where hardeners are disclosed, and asserts that these hardeners amount to curing agents, the use of which would read on the curing step of claim 1 as amended in the November 12, 2002 response.

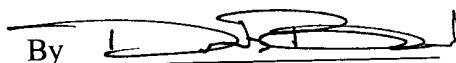
Applicants respectfully traverse for the reasons previously made of record, and for two additional reasons. First, the Examiner has not proven that hardeners are the same as curing agents. Second, claim 1 recites that the curing step is performed on the non-magnetic layer after the non-magnetic layer is dried. Mori's mere statement that hardeners may be present in a non-magnetic layer does not suggest that a separate hardening or curing step is performed after the non-magnetic layer is dried. Therefore, the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness at this point. "To establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974)." M.P.E.P. § 2143.03. Accord. M.P.E.P. § 706.02(j).

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are believed to be clearly patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the claims in light of the above remarks is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Dated: January 9, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

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